



Minidoka NHS News

Breaking News

Minidoka NHS has just recently become a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, joining other American sites such as Martin Luther King Jr. NHS, Manzanar NHS, and the Wing Luke Museum along with international sites such as The Gulag Museum of Communism (Russia), District Six Museum (South Africa), and Liberation War Museum (Bangladesh). Look for more information about the Coalition in the March issue.

Recent posts on our FaceBook page include: George Takei Addresses Internment During WW II; Takashi Hori and the Panama Hotel in Seattle; and Todd Endo and the Selma to Montgomery March. Watch for new posts several times a week.

As part of the preparation for the NPS Centennial in 2016, all parks are developing Foundation Documents to highlight current conditions in parks and outline goals for the future. The Minidoka Foundation Document Workshop is scheduled for March 10-12 in Idaho. A separate workshop is scheduled to focus on the Bainbridge Island unit.

The 2015 Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium will be held on June 24-25 at Boise State University. This year's venue will be the Micron Business and Economics Building on the west side of the campus. The facility holds 250 people – let's fill it up!!!!

Mess Hall: Interpretive Props



The kitchen area of the mess halls

Future planning for the site includes the rehabilitation of the Mess Hall that was returned to the site in the summer of 2011. The structure has been stabilized so that visitors on a ranger-led tour can view the interior. A more permanent stabilization is planned for the future.

Some initial interpretive elements have been introduced. The Western Center for Historic Preservation, based out of Grand Teton National Park, built eight picnic tables based on historic photographs. An original white table like the one in the photo and a second serving table came with the structure and are on exhibit.

Some interpretive props have been purchased for the kitchen area: potato masher; egg beater; cast iron frying skillets (3 sizes); black enamel coffee pot; and a white enamel basin.

We are looking for period pieces such as the ones in the photo above: pots of various sizes; flour sifter, spatulas; laddles; large salt and pepper shakers; serving spoons; and other items typical of a large-scale kitchen operation in the 1940s. We welcome any help in locating objects that can be used in interpreting both the kitchen and serving areas of the mess halls.

Minidoka Irrigator Headlines February 1943

Each month this column will feature headlines from the *Minidoka Irrigator* during the same month starting with February 1943.

February 3: ***Glamour Interest Rises – Block Candidates Picked, Section V Sets Pace***

This is round one in the “Sweetheart of Minidoka” contest.

February 6: ***War Registration ordered Here – All Males, Females 17 and Older are Affected***

Announcement of the “Loyalty Questionnaire”

February 6: ***Ex-Bainbridge Residents Coming Here***

177 residents originally from Bainbridge Island are relocating to Minidoka from Manzanar WRA Center.

February 8: ***Letter from President Roosevelt to Secretary of War Stimson***

Support from President Roosevelt for the organization of a combat team consisting of loyal American citizens of Japanese descent.

February 10: ***Routing of Mail for Internees Explained***

Discusses censorship of domestic internee letters.

February 17: ***Evacuee Role in Saving Sugar Beet Crop Cited in Booklet***

“The Sugar Beet,” a quarterly published by the Amalgamated Sugar Company of Ogden Utah, cites role of Japanese in saving the sugar beet crop

February 19: ***25 Miles Speed Limit Ordered.***

A 25 mph .speed limit to be enforced on project roads. Speeding had been a problem.

February 19: ***Magic Valley JACL Chapter Plans Pushed***

Article discusses plans to create a chapter of the JACL in the Magic Valley for people of Japanese ancestry not incarcerated in Minidoka.

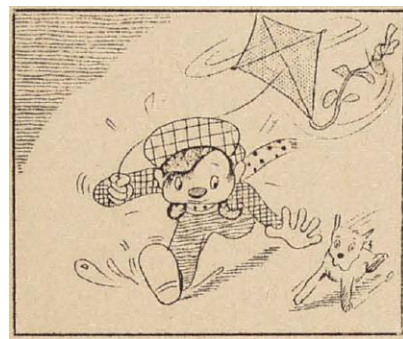
Minidoka Irrigator

On September 10, 1942, one month after the camp opened, the first issue of the *Minidoka Irrigator* appeared. Initially mimeographed twice a week, the *Irrigator* became a printed newspaper on February 27, 1943. The last issue was printed on July 28, 1945.

The *Irrigator*, just like the other WRA camp newsletters, disseminated WRA rules and regulations plus news about the Hunt community and individuals: events, vital statistics, news from other camps, sports, diagrams of camp layouts, etc. It functioned like a typical community newspaper except that it was subject to editorial interference and overt censorship.

The paper did cover some controversial topics such as the construction of the barbed-wire fence, the electrification of the fence, and the boilermen’s strike. Articles about Gordon Hirabayashi and Min Yasui appeared in 1942 while topics related to the loyalty questionnaire and resettlement became important news items in 1943.

The newspaper staff changed frequently as people joined the military or relocated. Reporters and editors received monthly



Eddie Sato drew cartoons for the *Irrigator*. “Dokie” is his character’s name

payments of \$12-\$19 depending on their job description.

A variety of smaller publications also appeared in the camps: school newsletters; church bulletins; literary periodicals; and high school yearbooks.

Papers at the other nine camps include: *Manzanar Free Press* (CA); *Gila News Courier* (AZ); *Granada Pioneer* (CO); *Heart Mountain Sentinel* (WY); *Jerome Communique/Jerome Denson Tribune* (AR); *Poston Chronicle* (AZ); *Rohwer Outpost* (AR); *Topaz Times* (UT); and *Tulean Dispatch/Tule Lake Newell Star* (CA). Assembly Centers also had newspapers during the months they held incarcerated before being sent to the WRA Centers

For further information, see the Densho website: www.densho.org.



The staff of the *Minidoka Irrigator* outside their office in one of the barrack buildings.

Field of Dreams

Build it and they will come. . . . That is our hope as we research the role of baseball and softball at Minidoka War Relocation Center in particular and the incarceration experience in general. Our goal is to rebuild what we think was "Center Field," one of the 14 ball fields at Minidoka. We want to recreate the field so that games can be played on it during the Pilgrimage or when school and other groups tour the site. It will help us introduce the historic site to people in a very tangible way.

We have found some wonderful information during our research. The *Minidoka Irrigator* has provided box scores, game highlights, and individual achievements. The Hunt High School 1944 and 1945 Yearbooks have photographs of the High School teams that tended to outscore their opponents.

Hank Fukana and George Nakama have provided some personal information. We



A scoreboard used at one of the baseball/softball fields.

have also heard stories of local youth sneaking *into* camp to play baseball!!

The hardest part has been finding images of the actual fields. The photo above shows a scoreboard and we located a photo of a backstop. From these photos, it appears that the field was minimal.

There was a scoreboard, a backstop, and player benches. There is no indication that it was irrigated. In addition to rebuilding the ball field, we plan to clear the amphitheater area where people would watch ball games, plays, and other events.

Part of the project will be the creation of supporting interpretive materials to highlight the importance of baseball and softball during the incarceration experience. These materials will include a wayside exhibit panel overlooking the field; site bulletins; and a plaque listing all donors to the project.

We are also in the process of adding a souvenir Minidoka baseball and softball to our bookstore area.

If you have personal knowledge or images of baseball/softball being played at Minidoka, please get in touch with Carol Ash at 208-933-4125 or carol.ash@nps.gov. We welcome suggestions about this project and will provide updates in future issues.

In Next Month's Issue

- Military Exhibit at Hagerman Fossil Beds NM
- Status of Honor Roll Additions
- Book of the Month – *Surviving Minidoka*
- Herrmann House Rehabilitation Update
- Sites of Conscience
- Civil Liberties Symposium Update
- Empty Chair Project - Alaska
- Minidoka Blog

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Book Corner:

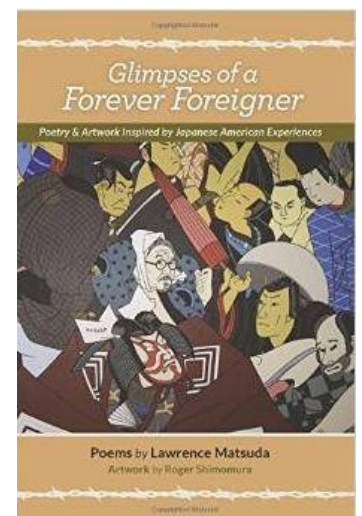
Glimpses of a Forever Foreigner – Poems by Lawrence Matsuda with Artwork by Roger Shimomura

*When hecklers circle a north Seattle mosque after 9-11
I won't turn my back
In silence knowing vultures
will descend on shuttered stores
and homes when hate
stains holy walls.*

*Who will stand
on granite mosque stairs
link arms with brown brothers
and sisters?*

These are the first two stanzas of "Legacy," one of 38 new poems by Lawrence Matsuda. Roger Shimomura's colorful paintings reinforce the power of the words in many of the poems and introduce the six parts of the book.

Roger Shimomura was a young boy at Minidoka and Lawrence Matsuda was born there in 1945.



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Bainbridge Island Special Event: *Snow Falling on Cedars*

This newsletter is published monthly for our friends and partners across America.

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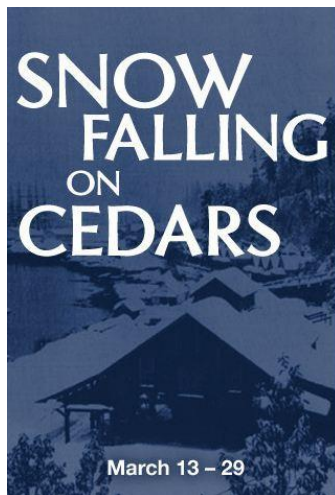
Photographs

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The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial on Bainbridge Island is a unit of Minidoka NHS. It is managed by Klondike Gold Rush NHP

Comments? Write to:

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An adaptation of David Guterson's acclaimed story of mystery, love, and identity - *Snow Falling on Cedars* - will be presented several times at the Bainbridge Island Performing Arts Center from March 13-29.

The saga shifts from a courtroom to strawberry fields to bloody battlefields as the characters search for the truth in a buried history.

The play is sponsored by The Maggi Rogers Fund and is supported in part by a grant from the Washington State Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. Outreach programs are supported by a grant from Humanities Washington.

Performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturday, March 13-14, March 20-21, and March 27-28 at 7:30 pm and Sundays, March 15, 22, and 29 at 3:00 pm. For further information and ticket prices, call 206-842-8569 or visit www.bainbridgeperformingarts.org.